

June 16, 2004
4002 Gandy Blvd
Tampa FL 33611

Dear FCC:

I am writing this letter to comment on the local programming now being offered by XM and Sirius Satellite Radio Companies. I don't really understand how there could be an express promise on the part of these companies to NOT do local programming and then they ignore their charge and do it anyway. I can only imagine the hell a radio station would pay upon making representations to the FCC and then doing just the opposite.

Rest assured I know many of the managers of these two companies personally and they will not stop with local news and traffic information for the 20+ markets they are serving now. This is only the beginning. There is even talk of a strategy whereby they use their potential introduction of indecent programming now banned on terrestrial radio as a smoke screen to hide their rollout of local services they know will compete directly with local radio stations.

Whether owned by a large corporation or a mom & pop, local programming on satellite radio will be a devastating blow to terrestrial radio. I programmed 970 WFLA here in Tampa for many years and built a large 24 hour/7 day news department which still thrives to this day. To think that investment in our community could be undermined by a satellite operator in New York or Washington is astonishing. We have invested millions of dollars over the years in local news programming and also in community service. Whether it is sponsoring a fund raiser for the local homeless shelter or broadcasting a high school football game, our stations are part of the fabric of Tampa Bay. Do you really think either satellite company has any intention whatsoever of marrying their local programming with this kind of community involvement? Of course not. But what they will do is cause serious damage or even destroy many local stations (especially AM stations) that do this every single day.

When the FCC authorized satellite radio you vowed to protect vibrant local broadcasting and the Commission also promised to take "any necessary action to safeguard the important service that terrestrial radio provides." The time for that action is NOW.

I wholeheartedly support the NAB Petition. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Kindest regards,

Gabriel Hobbs
Vice-President of Programming – News/Talk/Sports
Clear Channel Radio